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Ministry of Forests and Range

RED BLUFF BAND SECURES ACCESS TO CROWN TIMBER

VICTORIA – The Red Bluff Band has signed two forestry agreements that provide $325,000 and access to up to 285,000 cubic metres of timber, Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman announced today.

"These agreements allow the Red Bluff Band to develop a business that will provide income and jobs for its members while helping fight the mountain pine beetle epidemic," Coleman said.

The first agreement will provide $325,000 and access to 35,000 cubic metres of timber in the Quesnel Timber Supply Area. The second will provide access up to 250,000 cubic metres of beetle-infested timber in the Quesnel Timber Supply Areas.

Under the Forestry Revitalization Plan, the Province committed to reallocate timber to communities, woodlot operators and First Nations to create new opportunities in forestry. Since 2002, government has shared over $116 million in forestry revenue and access to about 16.6 million cubic metres of timber.

The Red Bluff Band has 129 members on four reserves near Quesnel. It is the 102nd First Nation to negotiate a forestry-related agreement with the Province. The band plans to use the revenue provided in the agreements towards capital investments for harvesting the beetle trees and replanting the forest.

"These agreements provide a foundation from which our members will expand economic activity on our traditional territory," Chief Clifford LeBrun said. "As we have always done, we will rely on the resources of the land to support current and future generations."

Since 2001, the Province has been working with First Nations to provide economic growth and opportunities, especially in traditional areas like forestry. Government is committed to strengthening relationships with First Nations based on reconciliation, recognition and constructive consultation on social and economic issues.

For more information on the provincial government's Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan, visit www.gov.bc.ca/pinebeetle.

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